

Context for Medicare payment policy

ISSUE: MedPAC's March Report to the Congress includes an introductory chapter that places the Commission's recommendations within the broader context of the federal budget and health care system. The chapter highlights the cost pressures already facing the Medicare program and the projections of continued growth.

KEY POINTS: The draft chapter describes Medicare's place within the broader U.S. health system, discusses the factors driving the growth of Medicare and health care overall, and lays out Medicare's long-term financial situation. This chapter also discusses provisions in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act that are projected to change the rate of Medicare spending growth.

ACTION: Commissioners should provide comments on the scope, substance, and tone of this draft chapter for the March 2011 report.

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